

REMARKS

This application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated December 5, 2003. Claims 10-16, 34, and 35 are presented for examination, of which Claims 10, 34, and 35 are in independent form. Claims 34 and 35 have been added to provide Applicants with a more complete scope of protection. Claims 10-16 have been amended to define still more clearly what Applicants regard as their invention. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

Applicants note that item 12 (a)(2) on form PTOL-326, Office Action Summary, incorrectly states that certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. 09/690,393. Those copies were actually filed in Application No. --08/690,393--. Corrected priority acknowledgment is respectfully requested with the Examiner's next paper.

Claims 10-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,552,901 (Kikuchi et al.).

As shown above, Applicants have amended independent Claim 10 in terms that more clearly define what they regard as their invention. Applicants submit that this amended independent claim and new independent Claims 34 and 35, together with the remaining claims dependent therefrom, are patentably distinct from the cited prior art for at least the following reasons.

As is discussed in much greater detail in the present applicaito, the present inveniton is intended to facilitate the use of a scanner or similar input device by uses of a network. Conventionally, a scanner is typically connected to a single computer. this is

both due to the short length that is required for the input cable, and because of the inconvenience for a user who may need to go back and forth between a scanner and the computer used to control the scanner, if (for example) multiple documents are to be scanned.

The aspect of the present invention set forth in Claim 10 is an image processing apparatus. The apparatus includes a reader, an interface, a LAN information memory, a designation unit, an image memory, and a controller. The reader reads an original image and generates image data representing the read original image. The interface connects the image processing apparatus to a local area network having a plurality of terminals. The LAN information memory stores information on a user on the local area network, and the designation unit designates a user on the local area network to which the image data from the reader are to be transferred, based on the information stored in the LAN information memory. The image memory connected to the reader, not through the interface, stores the image data from the reader in correlation with the user designated by the designation unit, and the controller controls the image processing apparatus so as to cause the reader to read the original image and to generate the image data and to cause the image memory to store the image data from the reader after the designation unit designates the user.

Among the important features of Claim 10 are the LAN information memory storing information on a user on the local area network, the designation unit designating a user on the local area network to which the image data from the reader are to be transferred, based on the information stored in the LAN information memory, the image

memory connected to the reader, not through the interface, storing the image data from the reader in correlation with the user designated by the designation unit, and the controller controlling the image processing apparatus so as to cause the reader to read the original image and to generate the image data and to cause the image memory to store the image data from the reader after the designation unit designates the user. As such, a user can obtain image data by referring to a storage area in correlation with the user by means of the terminal connected to the LAN. By virtue of this structure, a plurality of users on a network are able to share image data. Additionally, because the image data can be stored without using the LAN, data traffic on the LAN is reduced.

Kikuchi relates to a client/server system and more particularly, to a system which offers a facsimile communication facility to the user of each client terminal. In the *Kikuchi* arrangement, FAX server 1 and Remote Fax 9 are connected via a LAN, and data from Remote Fax 9 is stored into document data storage 30 in FAX server 1 via the LAN (see Fig. 1). Accordingly, any transfer of data from Remote FAX 9 to FAX server 1 is accomplished over the LAN, resulting in additional LAN data traffic. In contrast, in the aspect of the present invention recited in Claim 10, image data is stored in the image memory without use of the LAN, thereby reducing data traffic on the LAN.

The Office Action cites col. 6, lines 21-38, of *Kikuchi* as disclosing LAN memory means as recited in Claim 10. Applicants respectfully disagree. Even if the transmission document table 27 of *Kikuchi* is deemed to store, among other things, the user identifier of each request for FAX transmission, nothing has been found, or pointed out, in *Kikuchi* that would teach or suggest that table 27 stores information on a user on local area network, as recited in Claim 10.

The Office Action also cites col. 14, lines 48-67, as disclosing designation of a user on the local area network to which image data read by the reader are to be transferred. Again, Applicants respectfully disagree. Even if the cited passage discusses the Activity Start Process of FAX server 1, in which communication management unit 10 derives document data that have been received by the remote FAXes 9, and FAX server 1 sends information for a memory status request, that does not in any way teach or suggest designating a user on a local area network to which image data read by the reader are to be transferred, as recited in Claim 10.

Applicants submit that nothing has been found in *Kikuchi* that would teach or suggest LAN information memory storing information on a user on the local area network, either alone or combination with (1) a designation unit designating a user on the local area network to which the image data from the reader are to be transferred, based on the information stored in the LAN information memory, (2) image memory connected to the reader, not through the interface, storing the image data from the reader in correlation with the user designated by the designation unit, and (3) a controller controlling the image processing apparatus so as to cause the reader to read the original image and to generate the image data and to cause the image memory to store the image data from the reader after the designation unit designates the user, as recited in Claim 10.

For at least the above reasons, Applicants submit that Claim 10 is plainly allowable over *Kikuchi*.

Independent Claims 34 and 35 are method and computer program claims, respectively, corresponding to apparatus Claim 10, and are believed to be patentable for at least the same reasons as discussed above in connection with Claim 10.

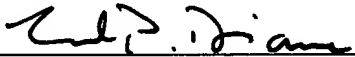
A review of the other art of record has failed to reveal anything which, in Applicants' opinion, would remedy the deficiencies of the art discussed above, as a reference against the independent claims herein. Those claims are therefore believed patentable over the art of record.

The other rejected claims in this application depend from independent Claim 10, and, therefore, are submitted to be patentable for at least the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, individual reconsideration of the patentability of each claim on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York Office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,


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